

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the above-captioned patent application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) An electrical connector comprising a plurality of conductive contacts arranged in a matrix pattern with a space left from one another, a conductive ground member disposed in the space, and an insulator holding the contacts and the ground member, wherein:

the ground member comprises a plurality of first ground plates and a plurality of second ground plates combined with the first ground plates;

each of the first ground plates having a first side and a first opposite side opposite to the first side and a plurality of first slit portions extending from the first side towards the first opposite side;

each of the second ground plates having a second side and a second opposite side opposite to the second side and a plurality of second slit portions extending from the second side towards the second opposite side;

the contacts being received in one-to-one correspondence in a plurality of contact receiving portions defined by combining the first and the second ground plates in a lattice fashion in the state that the second ground plates are inserted in the first slit portions while the first ground plates are inserted in the second slit portions;

each of the first slit portions having at least one contacting portion contacted with the second ground plate inserted therein; wherein each of the first slit portions has a pair of edges faced to each other in a direction perpendicular to the first side, the contacting portion protruding from at least one of the edges and wherein the first ground plate is provided with an additional slit portion formed in the vicinity of the contacting portion so that the contacting portion is brought into elastic contact with the second ground plate.

Claims 2 and 3. (Canceled).

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The electrical connector according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein the edges have straight-line portions parallel to each other, the contacting portion protruding from the straight-line portion in an arcuate shape.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein each of the first and the second ground plates is formed as an elongate plate by punching a conductive plate by a punch press, the first and the second ground plates having ground terminal portions extending from the first and the second opposite sides outward of the first and the second ground plates, respectively.

Claim 6. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The electrical connector according to claim 1, wherein each of the second slit portions has at least one contacting portion contacted with the first ground plate.

Claim 7. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The electrical connector according to claim 6, wherein each of the second slit portions has a pair of edges faced to each other in a direction perpendicular to the second side, the contacting portion protruding from at least one of the edges.

Claim 8. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The electrical connector according to claim 7, wherein the second ground plate is provided with an additional slit portion formed in the vicinity of the contacting portion so that the contacting portion is brought into elastic contact with the first ground plate.

Claim 9. (Currently Amended) [[An]] The electrical connector according to claim 7, wherein the edges have straight-line portions parallel to each other, the contacting portion protruding from the straight-line portion in an arcuate shape.

Claims 10. (New) An electrical connector comprising a plurality of conductive contacts arranged in a matrix pattern with a space left from one another, a conductive ground member disposed in the space, and an insulator holding the contacts and the ground member, wherein:

the ground member comprises a plurality of first ground plates and a plurality of second ground plates combined with the first ground plates;

each of the first ground plates having a first side and a first opposite side opposite to the first side and a plurality of first slit portions extending from the first side towards the first opposite side;

each of the second ground plates having a second side and a second opposite side opposite to the second side and a plurality of second slit portions extending from the second side towards the second opposite side;

the contacts being received in one-to-one correspondence in a plurality of contact receiving portions defined by combining the first and the second ground plates in a lattice

fashion in the state that the second ground plates are inserted in the first slit portions while the first ground plates are inserted in the second slit portions;

each of the first slit portions having at least one contacting portion contacted with the second ground plate inserted therein; wherein each of the second slit portions has at least one contacting portion contacted with the first ground plate; wherein each of the second slit portions has a pair of edges faced to each other in a direction perpendicular to the second side, the contacting portion protruding from at least one of the edges; and wherein the second ground plate is provided with an additional slit portion formed in the vicinity of the contacting portion so that the contacting portion is brought into elastic contact with the first ground plate.

**Request for Reconsideration:**

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claims 3 and 8 contain allowable subject matter and that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, Applicant is amending claim 1 to include the limitations of claims 2 and 3 and is adding new claim 10, which combines the limitations of original claim 1 and claims 6-8. In addition, Applicant is amending claim 4 to depend from amended claim 1 and is amending claims 4-9 to conform better to U.S. claim drafting practice. Applicant maintains that the scope of claim 10 is identical to that of claim 8, as originally filed. No new matter is added by the foregoing amendments, and these amendments are fully supported by the specification. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the foregoing amendments and that the Examiner reconsider the above-captioned patent application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Applicant believes that no excess claim fees are due as a result of this responsive amendment. Nevertheless, in the event of any variance between the fees paid by Applicant and those determined by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, please charge any such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 02-0375.